

From: Jim Rumford [mailto:j.rumford@me.com]

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 3:16 PM

2014 MAY -2 PM 3: 26

Subject: City Council Public Testimony - Oppose Bill 69

Dear Members of the Honolulu City Council,

I strongly oppose Bill 69 and respectfully request that you permanently shelve this proposal.

Bus service should be fully restored, so that residents can once again easily traverse our island. This is a basic right for all of our residents.

However, funding for this basic service should not come from a source of revenue that violates the spirit and intent of our century-long ban on billboards, undermines the unique character of our community, and exposes City coffers to costly lawsuits.

This is a short-term solution to a funding problem that will end up costing Honolulu more in the long run. Tourists come here for the natural beauty of our islands. If Honolulu starts resembling the Mainland cities the tourists come from, they'll go elsewhere--to a destination where the people had the foresight to preserve the natural beauty. We, in fact, have a group that had the great foresight to preserve Honolulu's beauty through the billboard ban: the Outdoor Circle. Let's continue to ban the blight of billboards by not allowing them on our city buses.

The billboard ban is a gift to us from past generations, sparing us from the divisive and offensive visual clutter plaguing other major cities. No other county in the state allows advertising like this. It is important for this Council to hold the line on our billboard ban and protect a defining feature of our beautiful island.

We know that opening up advertising on our buses will spark litigation because that is what is currently happening in other cities. I do not want my community divided by inflammatory billboards and my tax dollars gobbled up by free speech lawsuits.

Please find the funding for basic city services elsewhere. The tax on tourists is a good place to start. This is a reliable source of revenue for the City that helps to enhance the natural beauty that our economy relies on, not destroy it.

I feel strongly that our natural beauty is far more valuable to the quality of life for residents and the bottomline on our economy than anything offered in this measure. Please shelve Bill 69 and find a better way to balance the City budget.

Mahalo,

Carol Rumford
2702 Manoa Rd
Honolulu, HI. 96822